FIRST COMICS
SPECIAL #1
JAN. $1.25
NO. 1
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DYNAMO JOE
SPECIAL
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Dear Tabby

C/O FIRST COMICS
435 N. LASALLE
CHICAGO IL 60610

Welcome to the First **Dynamo Joe Special**, reprinting the very first appearance of the battling behemoth (originally published in **Mars** #10-12), with eight new pages of material included to bring new and old readers up to date for the return of **Dynamo Joe** as a continuing monthly series, beginning next month!

Not only is the **DJ Special** a great introduction for new readers and a swell promotion for the new **DJ** series, but it is also a great place to run a few of the many letters we received on the highly successful **Dynamo Joe** mini-series!

People of First:

I wanted to compliment you on the first decent comic First has put out in a long time.

Dynamo Joe is a class act and should set the standard for all these robot comics out these days.

I personally don't know anything about Japanese robots or their ilk, but I can tell a work of inspiration when I see one.

I know Mr. Rice to be a robot freak with a collection surpassed by none, and I'm sure few people would deny the love and craftsmanship he's poured into his work.

Doug is well deserving of his Out-standing Newcomer Award nomination last year, and if given the time to put the required care in the book, it should rise to great heights.

Best of luck to you all.

Steve Rude
Somewhere in Wisconsin

Dear Editor:

I love Doug Rice's art on Dynamo Joe. I can see where he is influenced by Japanese animation. That makes him very trendy. The way I look at trendy is that it gives me more of what's trendy. If I don't like what's trendy, such as fluorescent clothing, I can look forward to the day that the trendiness wears off and moves on. If I like what's trendy, such as button down collars, I get as much of it as I can, because I know the trendiness wears off and moves on. Doug's art I like, so I'm looking forward to more of it.

While I'm not an admirer of giant robot comics, I appreciate the resourcefulness of said robots to do all sorts of things. So you're attracting an audience here that will not all run away just because the resourceful robot comic trendiness wears off and moves on. The reason must be the story as well as the art. I still want more info on Dynamo Joe's time – what's happening and why.

I hope to see Dynamo Joe continue after his mini-series is over, in some form or other. Keep up the good work.

Wally Stoelting
4202 Brookton Dr.
South Bend, IN 46614

To whom it may concern:

I could say several things about your comics... but let's get First things First. I'm a "never say die" Marvel fan, and I have been a Marvel fan for ten years... but I'm also a sci-fi type of guy, and they have not had a good story in that area since Starlord. Then, while picking up the new Alpha Flight, I noticed Dynamo Joe. Now let me describe the way I feel about such things. I have watched the Japanese cartoon "The Mobile Suit Gundam" five times. Although I don't know what the characters are saying, I love it anyway. Now let me get to the point... your mag is great! And I am very unhappy with its limited series status. Look, how many books do you have on a monthly basis going out? Maybe twelve? I would gladly pay two bucks per issue for a quality book of the type you currently have on limited status, and I know of at least twenty of my friends that feel the same way. So take a hint; your book doesn't look like just another Robo-Tech. Let it have a better chance than three issues... run it for a year and see how it does. I'll bet it will be a hit.

Oh, by the way, your other books are good, but Dynamo Joe is the way to go!

Marty A. Ware
[No address]

Dear Mr. Rice:

I am pleading with you to put out a continuing series of Dynamo Joe!

The art is pretty much the best I've ever seen except for the Japanese. The stories are fantastic!

Here are a couple of suggestions if you do a regular series: for each Dynamo suit have an A.P.S. (like the ones in First Adventures). Also have different types of battlesuits.

Paul Stamm
2823 Greendale Dr.
Rockford, IL 61109

Dear Sirs:

This letter is long overdue. I had meant to write sooner, but time and again some other matter interrupted. I regret the delay.

I am also grateful for it. I have had over a month now to consider a very simple question: Do I want more issues of Dynamo Joe? It has been a while since the first rush from reading the book passed. All too often, after this long, a book that first seemed stupendous has become rather ordinary. Pleasant, but not especially so. This has not happened to Dynamo Joe.

I didn't know what to expect when I first read of Sergeant Daro, Private Pomru, and the others caught up in an apparently unwinnable war against an unknown foe (Mars 10-12). I remember how angry I was that it ended so soon, so much unresolved. I remember wanting more.

I still do.

If you cannot keep Dynamo Joe going as a series of its own, at least consider reviving First Adventures. Perhaps with three rotating series, two per issue. How you do it does not matter. I simply want more. Lots more.

To Doug Rice, John Ostrander (who was kind enough to talk with me about the book at last November's Dr. Who convention) -- and all the others responsible for this book, I offer my deepest congratulations.

Brian Jordan
53125 Oakton Dr.
South Bend, IN 46635

NEXT MONTH: The return of **Dynamo Joe** in his own continuing monthly series!

-- Rick Oliver

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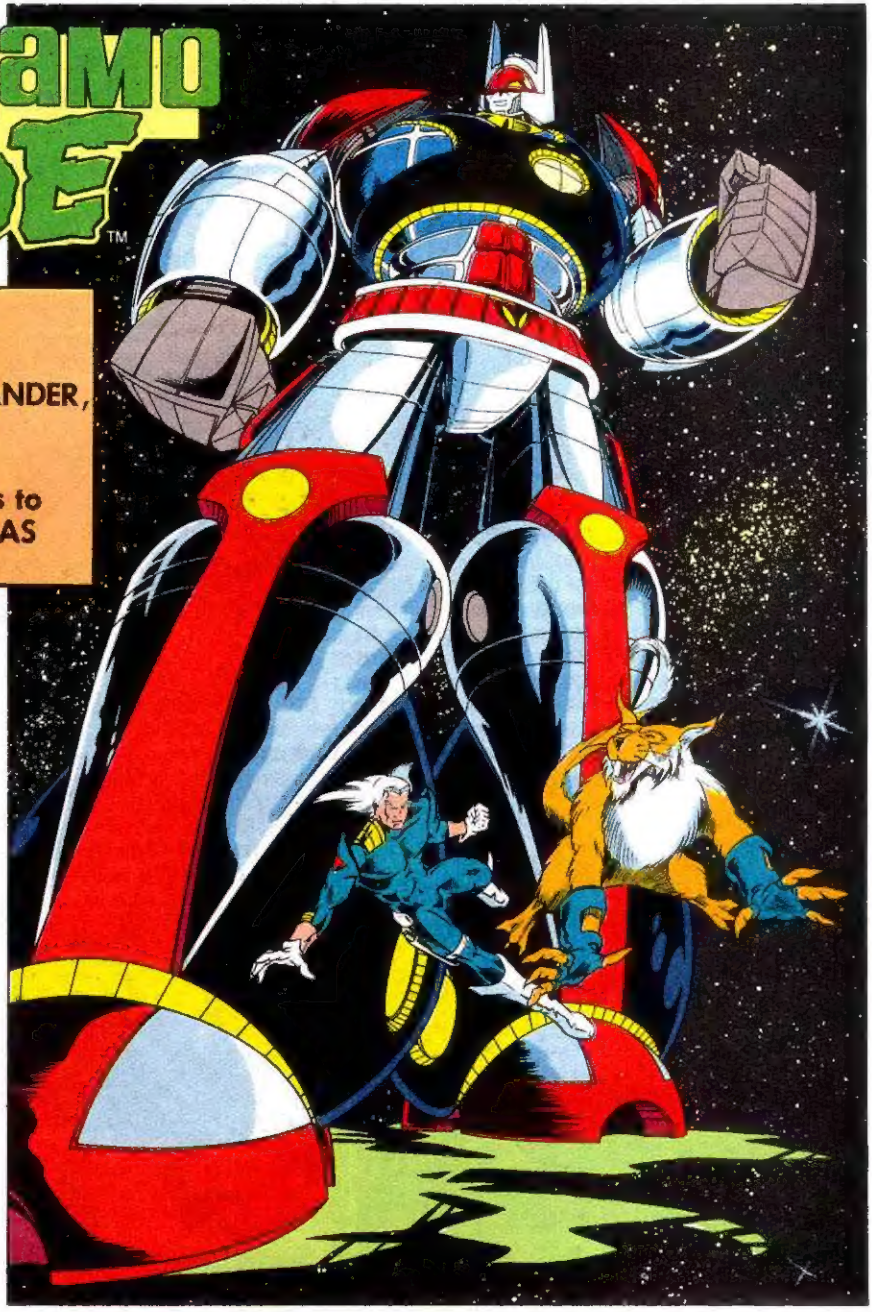
A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

Dynamo Joe™

DOUG RICE
creator, artist

JOHN OSTRANDER,
PHIL FOGLIO
writers

special thanks to
BRIAN THOMAS
RICK TAYLOR



prologue

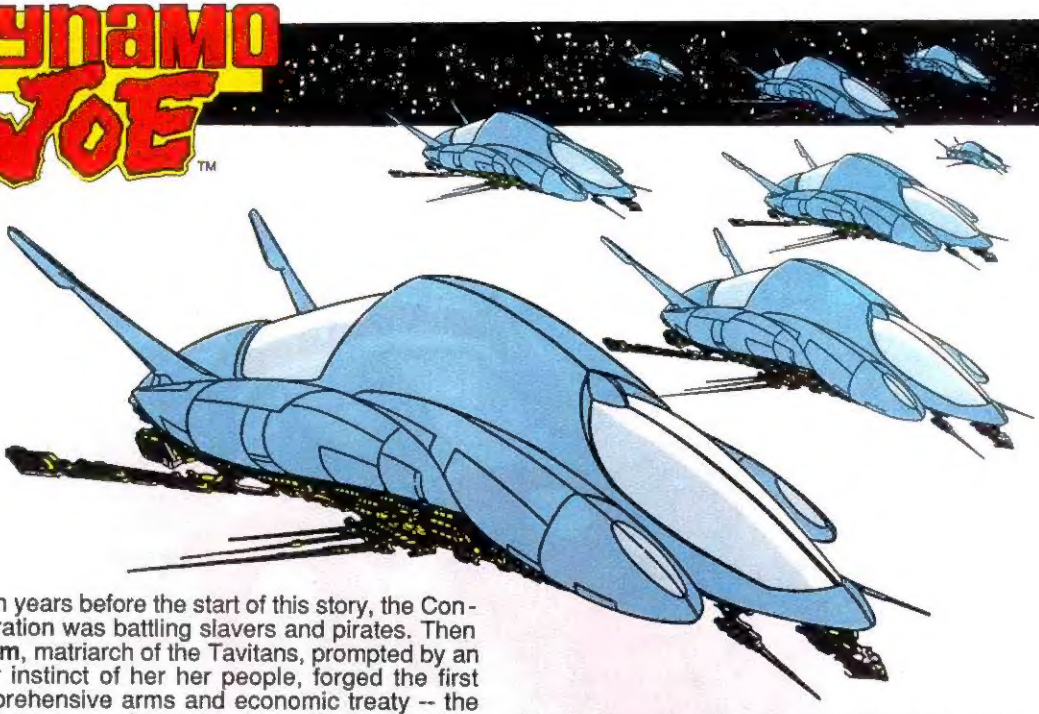
THE ORION WAR

It is a new age, more than a thousand years hence, yet human nature has changed little. The forces and conditions that have bred wars in the centuries gone by now breed a different kind of war, a new breed of warrior. One of these warriors is the robosoldier **Dynamo Joe**. This is his story.

Only three civilizations exist in our spiral of the galaxy, the greatest being the **Terran Confederation**, centered on Earth. Even within the Confederation, there are social, economic, and political rifts between the inner planets (those close to Terra) and the outer planets. The galaxy is shared with the cat-like **Tavitans**, with their home planet of Londree, and a benign master race, the **Imperium**, led by the enigmatic, immortal **Magna Khan**.

Grendy was here...

DYNAMO JOE™



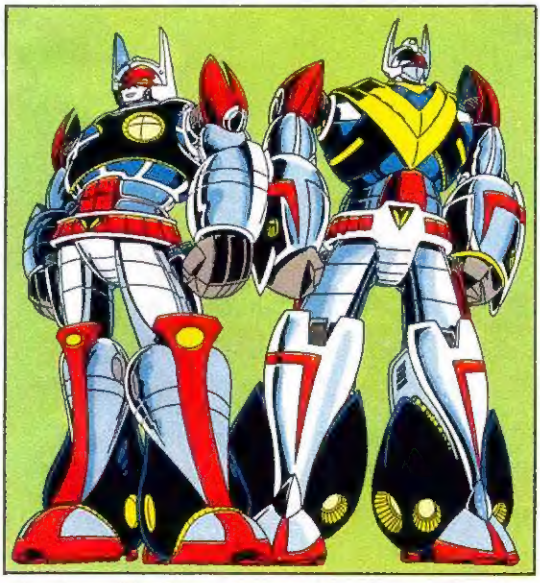
Ten years before the start of this story, the Confederation was battling slavers and pirates. Then **R'thim**, matriarch of the Tavitans, prompted by an inner instinct of her her people, forged the first comprehensive arms and economic treaty -- the **Alliance** -- between the Tavitans, the Confederation, and the Imperium as a bulwark against the doom she scented in the cosmic winds.

Shortly thereafter, the planets at the Galactic rim fell under attack by a bizarre extra-galactic **Enemy**. The foe moved at sub-light speeds, in an obsessive straight-line, devouring planets in its path. All attempts at communication were frustrated; no envoys returned alive. Reports filtered back of huge, nightmarish war machines; but, aside from this, nothing else could be learned.

The **Central Fleet** was diverted to deal with the problem and was decimated in what became known as the **Rim Battle Massacre**. Over half the fleet was destroyed, including the flagship, with the entire high command. All might have been lost had it not been for **Akira Shimamura**, the head of the supply section, on whom command fell. With a series of brilliant tactical maneuvers, Shimamura was able to disengage what remained of the fleet and bring it to safety.

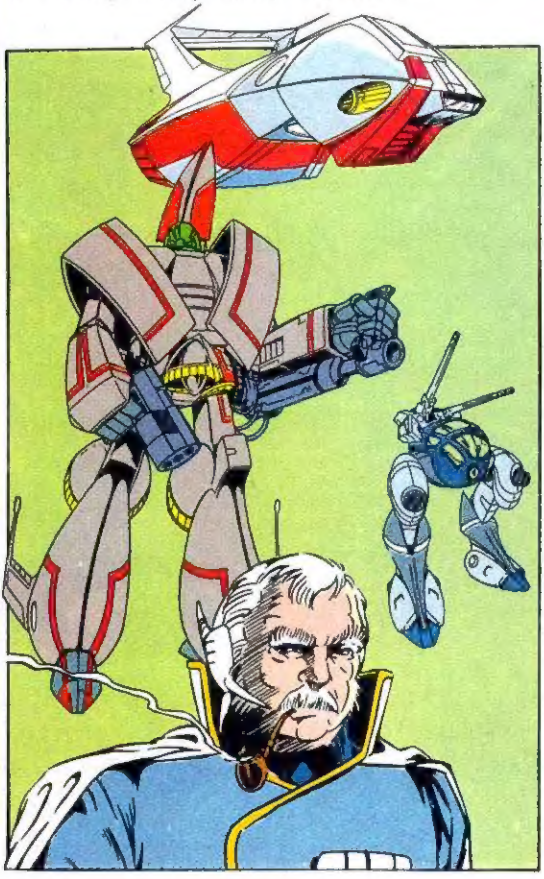
The situation was desperate. Mercenaries were brought in to delay the Enemy while the Alliance prepared new strategies (where these mercenaries and their strange weapons came from remained a closely kept secret). Shimamura was put in over-all command. **General Sergei Ippolitov** began to create the Alliance's primary defenses around the gas giant Fergusson.

And the Dynamo-class battlesuits were created -- humanoid in form to be adaptable to a wide variety of environments, carrying a crew of two, the suits were the "grunts" of what came to be known as the **Orion War**, replacing the mercenaries on the front lines who, in turn, disappeared. Their exits were as mysterious as their advent.



On the political front, many of the **Outer Planets** of the Confederation perceived that they were not in any danger from this Enemy, although Londree and Terra were directly threatened. It became increasingly hard to pry any support from them for "Terra's War."

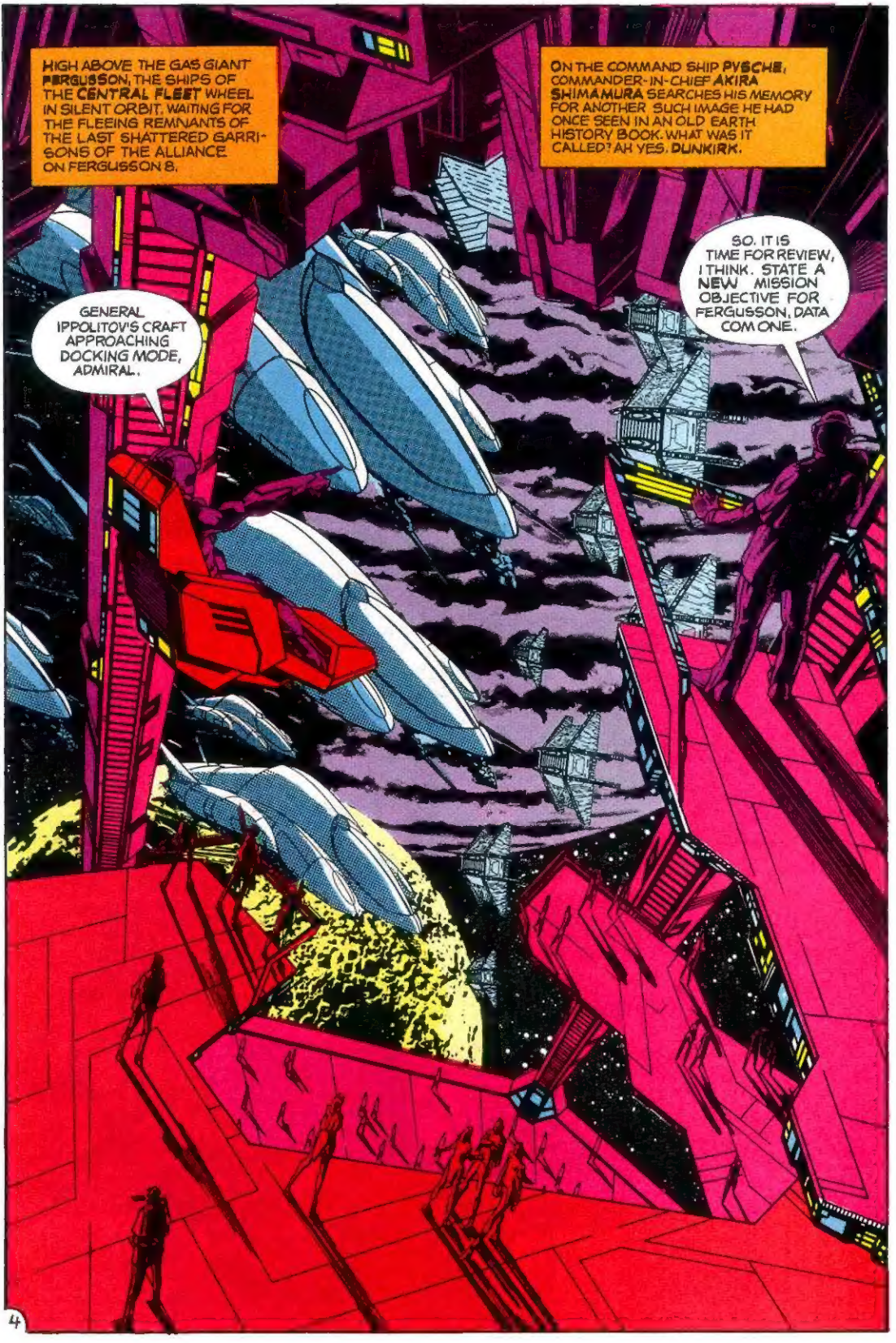
Meanwhile, Ippolitov had finished turning each of Fergusson's moons into a veritable fort and had engaged and held the Enemy for three years. Then the Enemy cracked the forts, one after another, in lightning attacks, rising up seemingly from within the moons. Mere days ago, the Allied Forces were crushed on the last surviving outpost, **Fergusson 8**, on the Sand Seas of Burana. Now, the Allies are desperately trying to retrieve their forces before the Enemy entirely overruns the moon...



IT IS THE EIGHTH YEAR OF THE ORION WAR, AND FOR THE ALLIANCE, THINGS HAVE BEEN BETTER.
DYNAMO JOE™
FIREBALLS INCOMING!
SHWUMP!
HELLIONS ALOFT, GET TO YOUR MOTHERSHIP! 7TH TEXAS CAVALRY, WHERE ARE YOU?

ARTIST/CREATOR-DOUG RICE
WRITER-JOHN OSTRANDER
LETTERER/COLORIST-RICK TAYLOR
EDITOR-MIKE GOLD
retreat from FERGUSSON
TRANSPORT DOWN BY THE SAND SEA, GENERAL IPPOLITOV. SEARCH AND RETRIEVE?
NYET! NO TIME!
LEAVE EQUIPMENT! ALL PERSONNEL MUST BOARD TRANSPORTS! NOW!
GETTING BOGIES ON THE HORIZON, FIELD MARSHALL!
THIS STAGING AREA'S GONNA BE OVER-RUN IN LESS THAN AN HOUR!

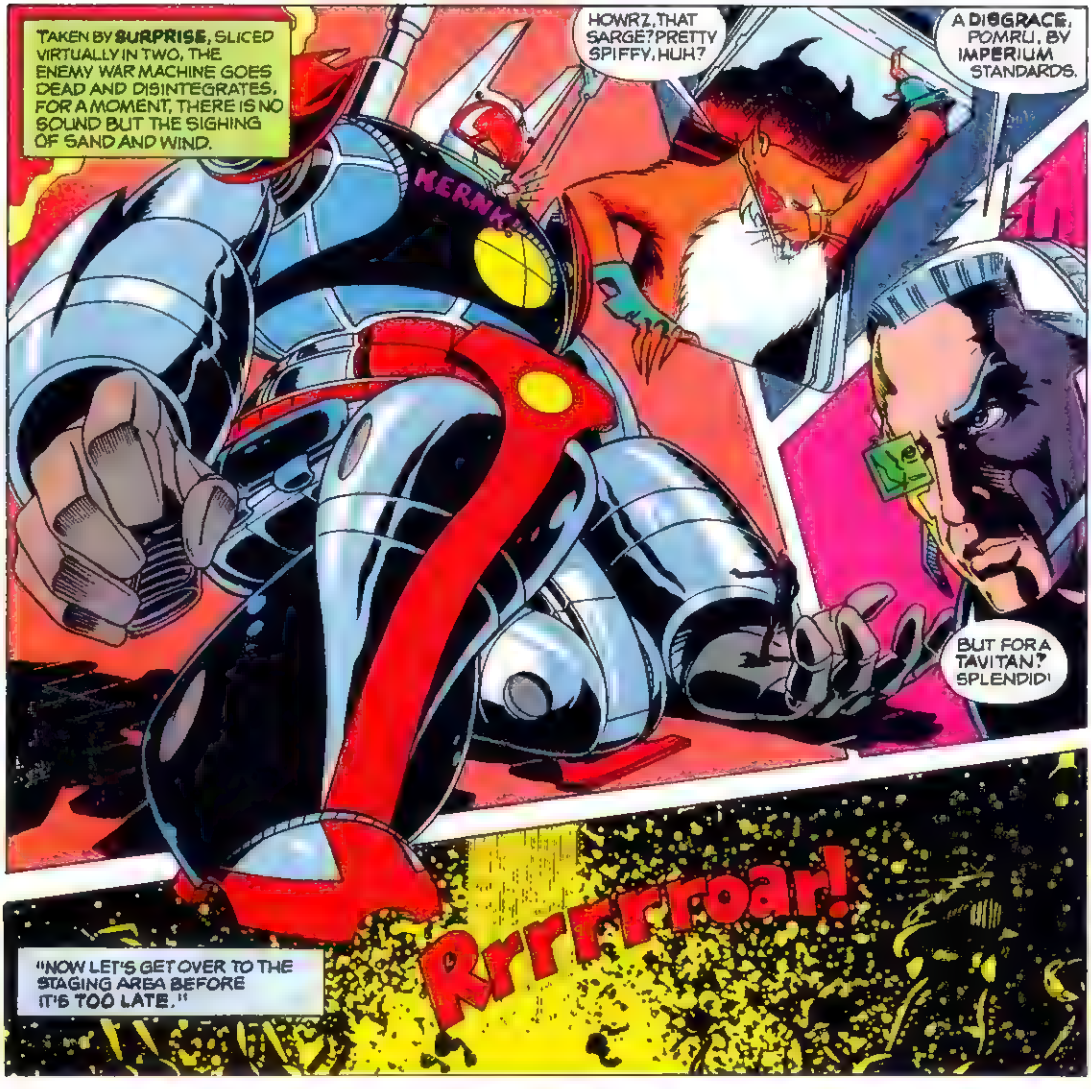
7TH TEXCAV! WHERE THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
chwomp!
chwomp!
SEARCH AND RETRIEVE THAT DOWNED WHALE, SUH! WE HAD FRIENDS ON HER!
THAT'S A BIG NEGATORY, SQUAD LEADER. YOUR TRANSPORTS TAKING OFF IN TEN MINUTES AND THE GENERAL AIN'T HOLDING THE BOAT FOR NO ONE!
WE READ, COMMAND. REIN 'EM IN, BOYS.
DA. IN A MOMENT.
STRANGE, COLONEL. THIS GROUND. IT HAS DRUNK SO MUCH OF OUR BLOOD STILL IT IS DRY.
ODIN'S JUICED UP, GENERAL. IF YOU'RE READY, SIR.
SO STRANGE...
SORRY YOU DOG-FACES. HOPE FER YER OWN SAKES YOU DIED AND THAT IT WAS QUICK.


HIGH ABOVE THE GAS GIANT FERGUSSON, THE SHIPS OF THE CENTRAL FLEET WHEEL IN SILENT ORBIT, WAITING FOR THE FLEEING REMNANTS OF THE LAST SHATTERED GARRISONS OF THE ALLIANCE ON FERGUSSON 8.
ON THE COMMAND SHIP PYSCHE, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AKIRA SHIMAMURA SEARCHES HIS MEMORY FOR ANOTHER SUCH IMAGE HE HAD ONCE SEEN IN AN OLD EARTH HISTORY BOOK. WHAT WAS IT CALLED? AH YES. DUNKIRK.
GENERAL IPPOLITOV'S CRAFT APPROACHING DOCKING MODE, ADMIRAL.
SO. IT IS TIME FOR REVIEW, I THINK. STATE A NEW MISSION OBJECTIVE FOR FERGUSSON, DATA COM ONE.

PURPOSE: TO BLOW OR CONTAIN THE ADVANCE OF THE ENEMY UTILIZING THE GAS-GIANT FERGUSSON AND ITS 8 MOONS. DEFENSE MADE POSSIBLE BY ENEMY'S OBSESSIVE STRAIGHT-LINE ADVANCE.
EACH MOON WAS FORTIFIED AND, AS IT SWUNG BEHIND FERGUSSON AND AWAY FROM THE FOE, THE MOON COULD BE RE-BUILT, RE-MODIFIED, EVEN SLIPPED INTO ANOTHER ORBIT.
FOR THREE YEARS, THE DEFENSES HAVE HELD...
NOW, THEY HAVE FAILED.
YOUR TACTICS WERE BRILLIANT, SERGEI; YOUR MISSION A SUCCESS. NO OTHER COULD HAVE DONE WELL SO LONG.
DA. AM GENIUS.
IF WE HAD BUT ONE CLUE TO WHO OR WHAT THIS ENEMY IS... WHAT THEY WANT...!
WE MUST MAKE DO WITH WHAT WE ARE GIVEN. ARE YOU PREPARED TO USE STARBUSTER?
DA. ONCE TROOPS IS CLEAR, WE DROP EGG.
OPTICS, ANY CHANCE OF SCANNING THE SAND SEA FOR DOWNED TRANSPORT?
NEGATIVE, DATA COM ONE.

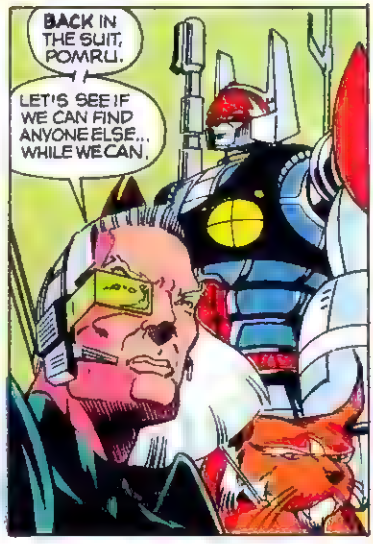
THE SAND SEA OF BURANA. TWO DAYS AGO HERE, THE ALLIANCE SUFFERED ITS MOST CRUSHING DEFEAT SINCE THE RIM BATTLE MASSACRE.
THE NIGHTMARE MACHINES OF THE ENEMY STILL PICK OVER THE BONES OF THE FALLEN LIKE SOME SCAVENGER FEEDING ON THE DEAD.
NOWR, SARGE?
NOT NOW.
10·019·JOE
WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL, POMRU
HE'S SEEN YA, SARGE.
ACCORDING TO PLAN, POMRU.
WAIT FOR IT
NOWR?
KLIK!
KLIK
HONT
SHWOMP!

HE RISES LIKE ARMORED VENGEANCE FROM THE SANDY GRAVE THAT HOLDS SO MANY OF HIS FELLOWS.
ROBOSOLDIER, DYNAMO CLASS; 70FT. TALL, 120 TONS, BUILT IN HUMANOID CONFIGURATION TO FIGHT IN A VARIETY OF TERRAINS, IT IS THE GRUNT OF THE ORION WAR, THE COMMON G.I. WHO CARRIES OUT THE PLANS AND SCHEMES OF THE HIGH COMMAND, FIGHTING AND DYING AND RARELY KNOWING WHY.
WATCH YOUR AZIMUTH, POMRU! ADJUST AND ALIGN!
NOW FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!
TO COMMAND, THIS BATTLESUIT IS JUST ANOTHER NUMBER, BUT TO ITS TWO MAN CREW THIS IS... DYNAMO JOE!
ROGER-DOKEY, SARGE!
ZZZSCHRAK!
KEEEEEEE!


TAKEN BY SURPRISE, SLICED VIRTUALLY IN TWO, THE ENEMY WAR MACHINE GOES DEAD AND DISINTEGRATES. FOR A MOMENT, THERE IS NO SOUND BUT THE SIGHING OF SAND AND WIND.
KERNK
HOWRZ, THAT SARGE? PRETTY SPIFFY, HUH?
A DISGRACE, POMRU. BY IMPERIUM STANDARDS.
BUT FOR A TAVITAN? SPLENDID!
"NOW LET'S GET OVER TO THE STAGING AREA BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE."
Rrrrrroar!

SARGE, THAT ISN'T...?
AFRAID SO, POMRU. THAT'LL BE THE LAST WHALE OUT.

THUFFERIN' MACINTOSH! THAT MEAN WE'RE TRAPPED BEHIND ENEMY LINES!


BACK IN THE SUIT, POMRU.
LET'S SEE IF WE CAN FIND ANYONE ELSE... WHILE WE CAN.

NEXT: THE
EGG!

DYNAMO JOE
LESS THAN FOUR HOURS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE ALLIANCE EVACUATED ITS TROOPS FROM THEIR LAST BATTERED OUTPOST ON FERGUSSON 8. THEY ARE IN DEEP TROUBLE.
"EGG" AWAY! INFORM ADMIRAL SHIMAMURA.
"THE EGG"—THE BRAINCHILD OF GEN. SERGEI IPPOLITOV —IS A STARBURSTER BOMB, 500 FT. FROM TIP TO TIP. IT IS THE LAST CARD THE ALLIANCE HAS TO PLAY.
HELLIONS, FLIGHTS 4 AND 6, CLOSE UP FORMATIONS.
LOOK SHARP! COMPANY'S CALLING!
THE KEY TO SURVIVAL
DOUG RICE
CREATOR/ARTIST
JOHN OSTRANDER
WRITER
STEVE HAYNIE
LETTERER
RICK TAYLOR
COLORIST
MIKE GOLD
EDITOR

FERGUSSON--A GAS GIANT--SEETHES UNEASILY IN ITS SLEEP, PERHAPS SENSING THE EGG'S MISSION.
SWARMS. I GOT 14 OVER HERE.
TEN OVER HERE.
IT WAS HERE--ON THE PLANETARY MOONS THAT RING FERGUSSON--THAT THE ALLIANCE HELD OFF THE ENEMY FOR THREE YEARS.
HOW COME I GOT ONLY THREE?
IT'S YOUR BREATH, DONOVAN.
CAN THE CHATTER AND FOCUS IN.
REMEMBER: THE KEY TO SURVIVAL IS TO KEEP MOVING.
THEY PASS FERGUSSON 8 ON THE FLY.
NOT EVERYONE GOT OFF FERGUSSON 8.
HOT JETS! SARGE! GETTING LIFE-FORM READINGS FROM CRATER BEARING ZERO-TWO-SIX.
AWRIGHT POMRU. LET'S BRING THE SUIT AROUND.
THE SUIT IS A DYNAMO CLASS ROBOSOLDIER, 70 FT. TALL, 120 TONS, AND POWERED BY A NUCLEAR FUSION REACTOR.
ONE OF 80,000 SUCH UNITS, THIS IS THE "GRUNT" OF THE ORION WAR. THE FACELESS NUMBER WHO FIGHTS AND DIES TO ACHIEVE THE AIMS OF THE HIGH COMMAND--GOALS THEY ARE SELDOM TOLD AND RARELY UNDERSTAND.
BUT TO SGT. ELANIAN DARO AND PVT. POMRU, THE SUIT IS MORE THAN A NUMBER. HE IS DYNAMO JOE!
KEW! KEEEEEW!

THEIR TRANSPORT CRAFT WAS DESTROYED, LEAVING DYNAMO JOE AND HIS CREW STRANDED BEHIND ENEMY LINES.
UP UNTIL A MOMENT AGO, THEY HAD THOUGHT THEY WERE THE ONLY ONES.
OWR NO! SARGE, LOOK!
GOING MY WAY SOLDIER?
GOING ANY WAY? I'M NOT REAL PICKY RIGHT NOW.
CALL ME JOE. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MS. WARREN?
WELLLL, I WAS HITCHING A RIDE ON THIS TRANSPORT, SEE, AND THERE'S THIS JOLT AND EVERYONE'S YELLING AND THEN THIS OAF STUFFS ME IN THAT POD...!
CIVILIANS AREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE IN A WAR-ZONE, MS. WARREN.
ANDA WARREN-- CORRESPONDENT, OMNI GALACTIC BROADCASTING. AND YOU ARE...?
OH PUH-LEASE! SPARE ME! FOR EIGHT YEARS THE MILITARY HAS SQUAWKED WAR AND THEN SLAMMED A LID ON EVERYTHING!
I DON'T BELIEVE THERE REALLY IS A WAR. HAVE YOU SEEN ANY OF THIS SO-CALLED ENEMY? I HAVEN'T!
LOOK OVER YOUR SHOULDER. POMRU! BATTLE STATIONS!
3

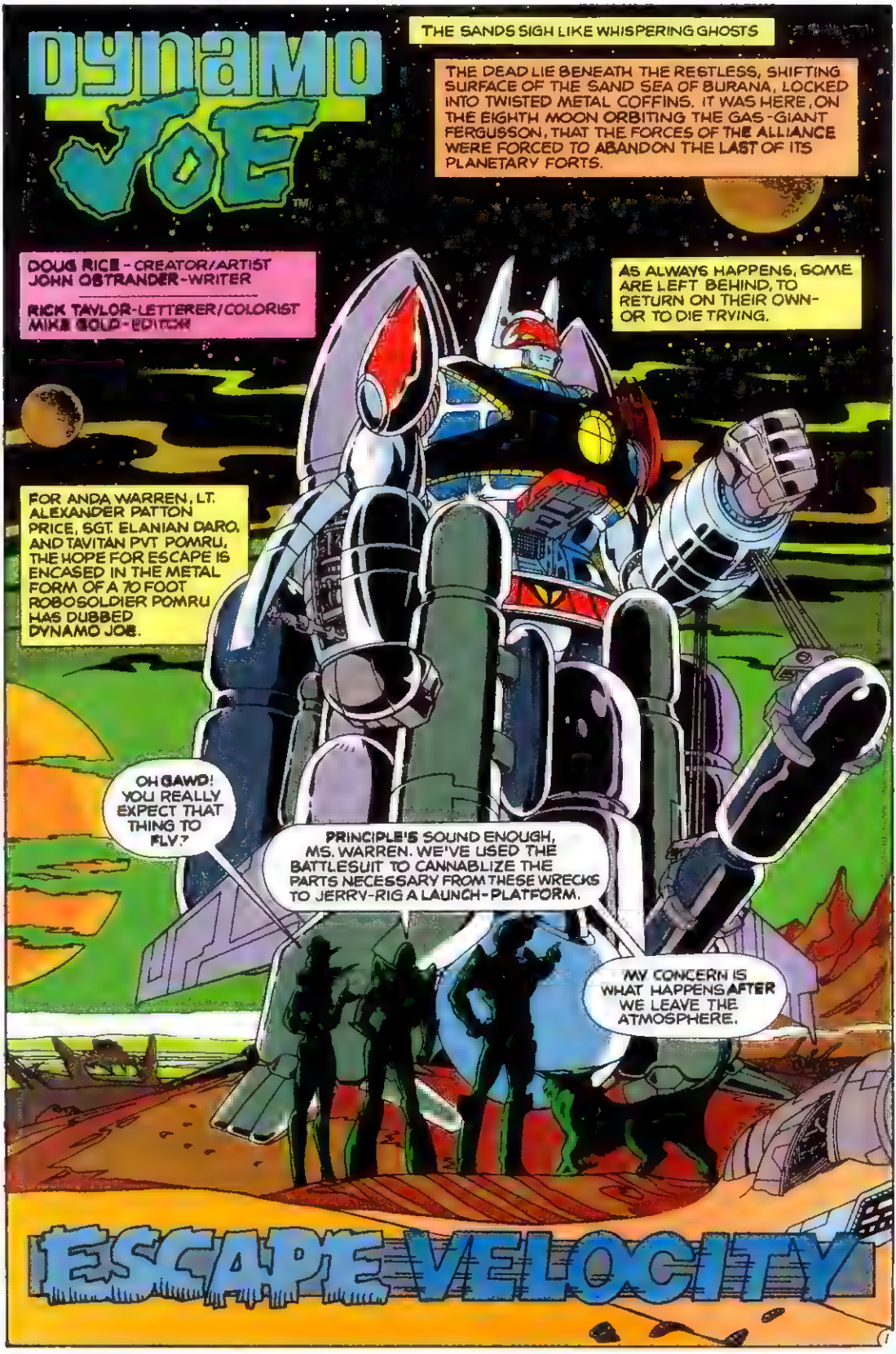
SARGE! THIS IS THE SAME SORT OF TRAP WE LAID FOR THEM A FEW HOURS BACK!
HOW'D THEY LEARN IT?
WHUMP!
SCHWUMP!
OH GAWD!
OH GAWD!
FUMP!
FUMP!
FADIDIDI
SZAK!
HEY! WHAT? UNHAND ME!
MMMMMRPH!
WARREN'S SAFE, BUT THE LEFT HAND IS N/A FOR COMBAT WHILE SHE'S IN IT, POMRU. COMPUTE AND COMPENSATE.
ENEMY VECTORING IN. ALL SIDES. GOOD.
ATTACK ATTACK ATTACK!
THRUM!
4

KRANGK!
KEEEEE!
DERNK DENK
MMMM MMMM, MMMM!
DEPLOY THERMONUCLEAR CANNON TO BATTLE CONFIGURATION.
ROGER-DOKEY, SARGE!
DINK DINK
KLANG!
FRDRPH MRDRSRDR!
ENTER RANGE AND LOCK ON SIGNAL.
ENTERED AND LOCKED, SARGE!
FWA DOOOOO
DOOOOM!
FIRE!
BOGIES RISING, SARGE!
5

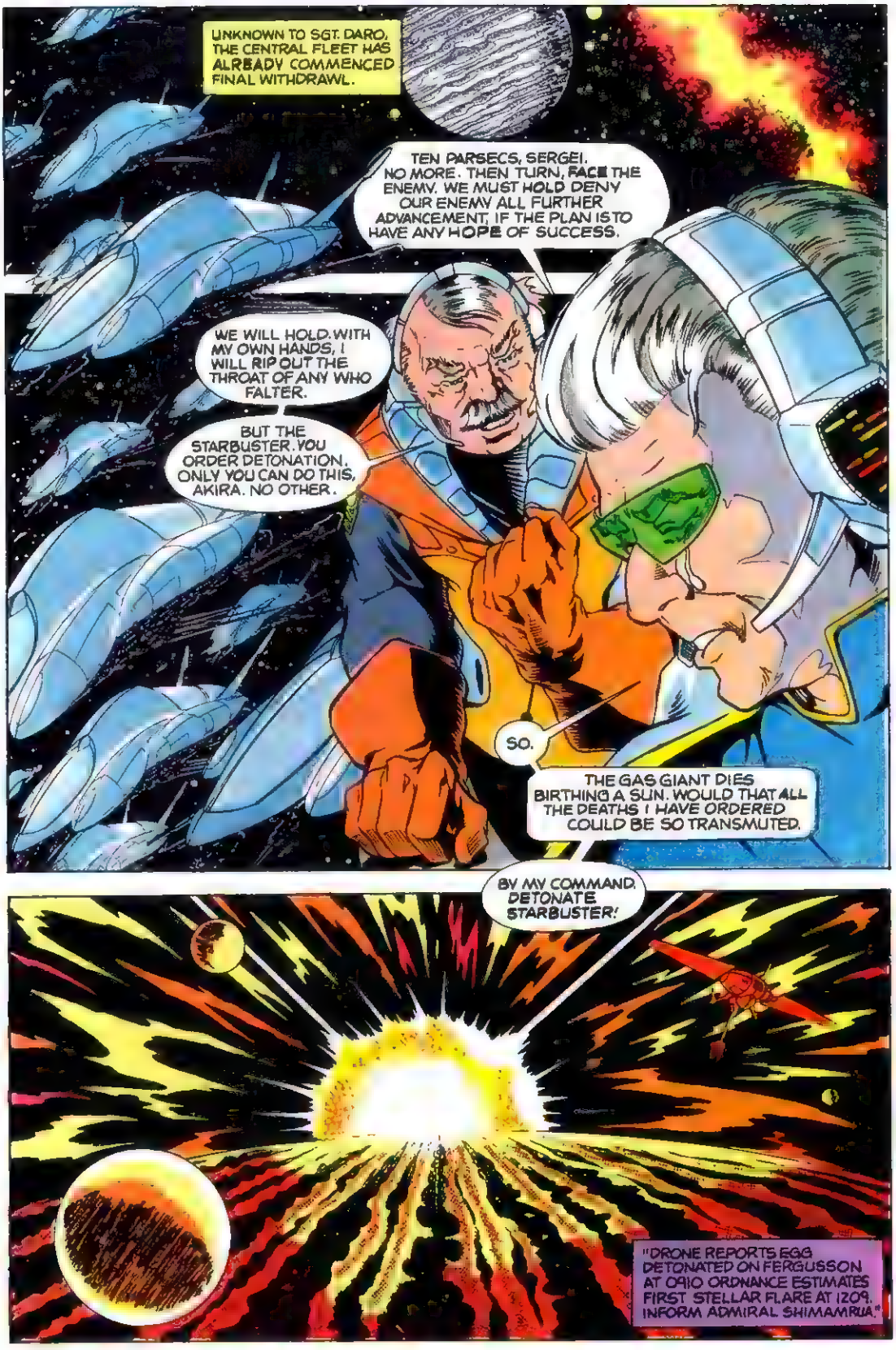
DAMN.
CHWA!
CHWA!
ZZZZZZ
ADJUST AND ALIGN FOR NEAREST TARGET! WE CAN'T BRING ANY OTHER WEAPONRY INTO PLAY WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING WARREN!
DAMN ALL CIVILIANS!
BOOM!
CHLOOO!
SARGE, THE LAST BOGIE'S DROPPING TOO FASSST! CAN'T GET A FIX...!
KRONG!
SCHREK!
HSSSSSS!

THERMOCANNON GONE! WE'RE PINNED!
GHOULIE'S SECRETING SOME KIND OF ACID! GONNA BLISTER THROUGH IF WE DON'T PEEL IT OFF, SARGE!
SSSZZZZLKKK
BERNK
RDRR! RGRDPH!
FIREBALL INCOMING!
NO! WAIT!
EEE
IT'S ONE OF OUR HELLIONS! HE'S RIDING A HOTBOX! *
EEEEEEEEE
*HOTBOX-- SLANG FOR A FIGHTER ON FIRE.
SHOOM!
BUHDOOM! BUHDOOM!
FRANG!
KSSSEE!
MONKEY OFF OUR BACK, SARGE!
UP AND AT 'EM, POMRU! THAT FLYBOY SAVED US BUT HE'S HEADED FOR A VERTICAL DESCENT!
7

SHHHHHRAK!
WOWR, SARGE! HOT-SHOT PULLED UP HIS NOSE AT THE LAST SECOND! HE'LL WALK AWAY!
DAMN YOU! YOU'RE JUST LIKE THAT OAF ON...!
OH GAWD! IS THAT ONE OF... THEM?
ALEXANDER PATTON PRICE, LIEUTENANT, EARTH ELITE FLIGHT COMMAND, MADAM.
HIT BY ENEMY ACK-ACK WHILST FLYING ESCORT TO THE STARBURSTER. HAD TO DITCH HERE.
STARBURSTER?
DEVICE DESIGNED TO TURN THE GAS-GIANT FERGUSSON INTO A NEW STAR.
HIGH COMMAND BELIEVES IT WILL DESTROY THE ENEMY. IT WILL CERTAINLY DESTROY ALL PLANETARY BODIES WITHIN A PARSEC, INCLUDING THIS ONE. AND US, OF COURSE.
I BELIEVE WE HAVE APPROXIMATELY 48 HOURS.
AWWR, HAIRBALLS! JUST WHEN EVERYTHING WAS LOOKING SPIFFY!
NEXT: THE SHATTERING CLIMAX--
ESCAPE VELOCITY!


DYNAMO JOE
THE SANDS SIGH LIKE WHISPERING GHOSTS
THE DEAD LIE BENEATH THE RESTLESS, SHIFTING SURFACE OF THE SAND SEA OF BURANA, LOCKED INTO TWISTED METAL COFFINS. IT WAS HERE, ON THE EIGHTH MOON ORBITING THE GAS-GIANT FERGUSSON, THAT THE FORCES OF THE ALLIANCE WERE FORCED TO ABANDON THE LAST OF ITS PLANETARY FORTS.
DOUG RICE - CREATOR/ARTIST
JOHN OSTRANDER - WRITER
RICK TAYLOR - LETTERER/COLORIST
MIKE GOLD - EDITOR
AS ALWAYS HAPPENS, SOME ARE LEFT BEHIND, TO RETURN ON THEIR OWN- OR TO DIE TRYING.
FOR ANDA WARREN, LT. ALEXANDER PATTON PRICE, SGT. ELANIAN DARO, AND TAVITAN PVT POMRU, THE HOPE FOR ESCAPE IS ENCASED IN THE METAL FORM OF A 70 FOOT ROBOSOLDIER POMRU HAS DUBBED DYNAMO JOE.
OH GAWD! YOU REALLY EXPECT THAT THING TO FLY?
PRINCIPLE'S SOUND ENOUGH, MS. WARREN. WE'VE USED THE BATTLESUIT TO CANNABLIZE THE PARTS NECESSARY FROM THESE WRECKS TO JERRY-RIG A LAUNCH-PLATFORM.
MY CONCERN IS WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE LEAVE THE ATMOSPHERE.
ESCAPE VELOCITY

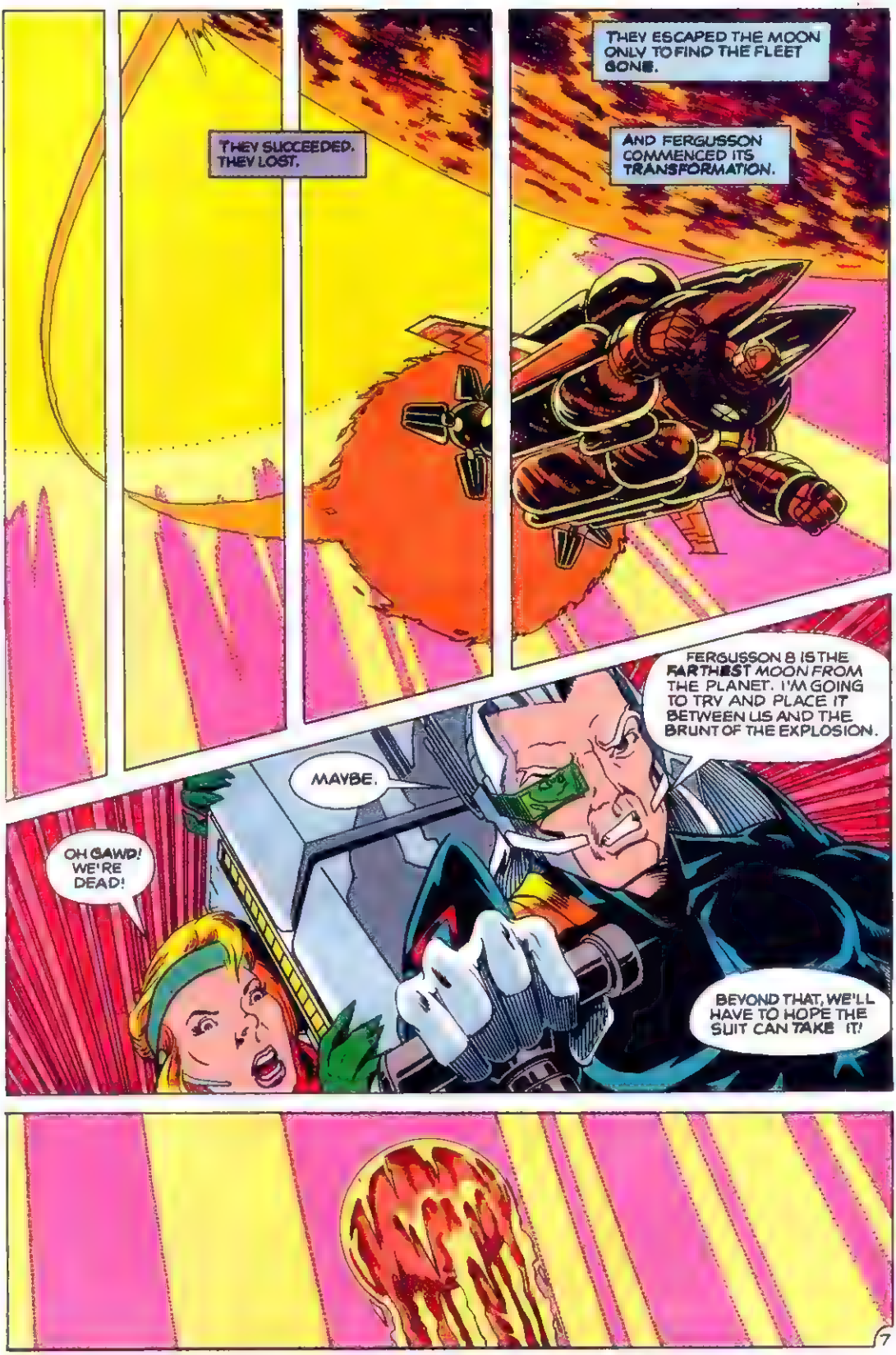
THE SUIT'S DESIGNED TO OPERATE IN A VARIETY OF TERRAINS, LIEUTENANT -- INCLUDING DEEP SPACE.
IT SEEMS OBVIOUS TO ME WE SHOULD SHOOT UP A FLARE OR SOMETHING AND WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO COME AND GET US.
FIRST, WE HAVE TO GET OFF PLANET.
NOT THAT ANYONE ASKED ME, OF COURSE.
YEAH! 'TIL THEN, WE'RE SITTING CHICKENS!
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, MS. WARREN, NO ONE'S GOING TO COME ANYWHERE NEAR HERE.
HIGH COMMAND IS SETTING OFF A STARBUSTER BOMB - THE 'EGG'-THAT'LL CONVERT FERGUSSON FROM A GAS-GIANT TO A STAR.
ASIDE FROM THE DEPLORABLE MORALITY INVOLVED, LT. PRICE, YOUR 'EGG' IS PATENTLY IMPOSSIBLE, GIVEN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF ANY KNOWN TECHNOLOGY! SO WHERE DID IT COME FROM
HOPEFULLY, THE CHAIN REACTION WILL INCINERATE THE ENEMY. UNQUESTIONABLY IT'LL DESTROY THIS MOON-AND US, IF WE'RE STILL ON IT!
YOU MAY FIND THIS HARD TO BELIEVE, MS. WARREN, BUT THE HIGH COMMAND HAS NOT SEEN FIT TO SHARE ALL ITS SECRETS WITH EVERY LIEUTENANT IN ITS COMMAND!
MS. WARREN, LT. PRICE--COULD YOU POSTPONE THIS UNTIL WE'RE TOPSIDE?
I'D LIKE TO RENDEVOUS WITH CENTRAL FLEET BEFORE THE EGG HATCHES.
2

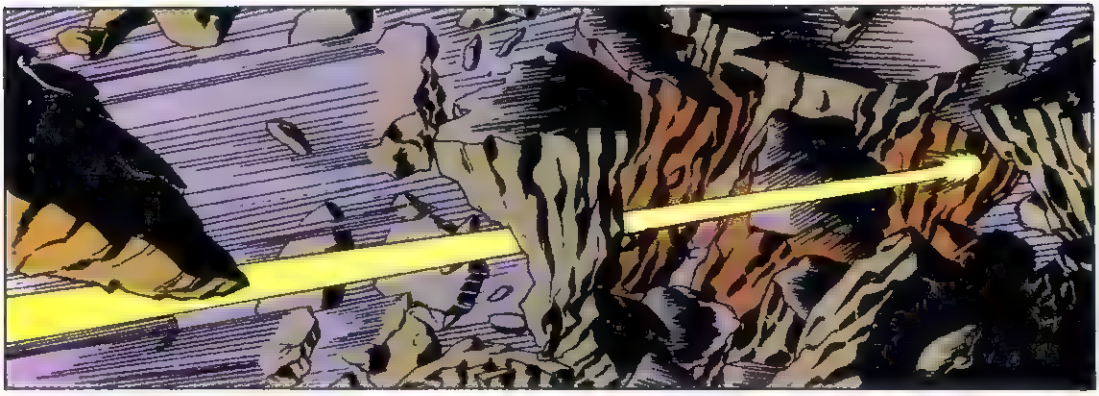

UNKNOWN TO SGT. DARO, THE CENTRAL FLEET HAS ALREADY COMMENCED FINAL WITHDRAWL.
TEN PARSECS, SERGEI. NO MORE. THEN TURN, FACE THE ENEMY. WE MUST HOLD DENY OUR ENEMY ALL FURTHER ADVANCEMENT, IF THE PLAN IS TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF SUCCESS.
WE WILL HOLD. WITH MY OWN HANDS, I WILL RIP OUT THE THROAT OF ANY WHO FALTER.
BUT THE STARBUSTER. YOU ORDER DETONATION. ONLY YOU CAN DO THIS, AKIRA. NO OTHER.
SO.
THE GAS GIANT DIES BIRTHING A SUN. WOULD THAT ALL THE DEATHS I HAVE ORDERED COULD BE SO TRANSMUTED.
BY MY COMMAND. DETONATE STARBUSTER!
"DRONE REPORTS EGG DETONATED ON FERGUSSON AT 0910 ORDNANCE ESTIMATES FIRST STELLAR FLARE AT 1209. INFORM ADMIRAL SHIMAMURA."

TIME: 1132 HOURS. LIFTOFF IN 30 MINUTES. SECURE YOURSELVES BACK THERE.
JOE WASN'T DESIGNED FOR FOUR, LADY, AND ANYWAY WHO ASKED YA?
MY ISN'T THIS COZY?
POMRU.
AWR, HAIRBALLS! EVEN THE CIVILIANS OUTRANK ME!
COMMENCING TERTIARY COUNTDOWN SYSTEMS CHECK.
WITH ALL DUE RESPECTS, LIEUTENANT, WE'VE ALREADY DONE THIS, SHOULDN'T WE JUST GET AIR-BORNE?
LIEUTENANT, DISCIPLINE HAS ITS PLACE, SO LONG AS IT DOESN'T WASTE TIME?
DISCIPLINE, SGT. DARO! DISCIPLINE! BACKBONE OF THE MILITARY, CORNERSTONE OF THE IMPERIUM, I HAD THOUGHT.
READY BACK THERE, POMRU?
BOGIES, SARGE!
COMING UP FAST BEHIND!
ROGER-DOKEY SARGE!
SO, DARO'S AN IMPERIAL, HMM? INTERESTING
BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!
POMRU! WHAT'S ON THE SCREENS?

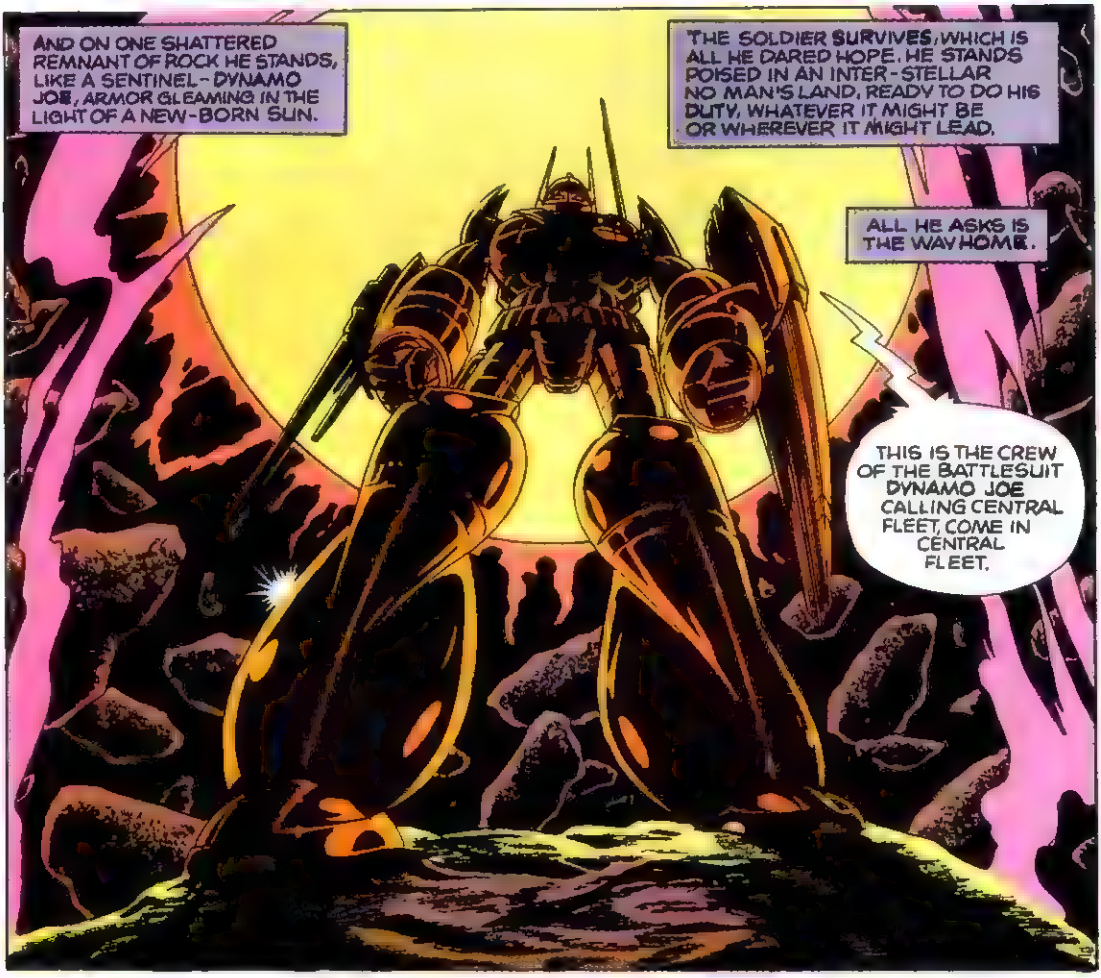
SCHWA
SCHWA
SCHWA
DAMNIT! ENEMY SWARM! CAN'T DEPLOY WEAPONS WITHOUT WRECKING THE LAUNCH PLATFORM!
TO HELL WITH THE COUNTDOWN! WE'RE GOING STARSIDE NOW!
CLIK
SHWOM!
"DRONE REPORT. 1203. FERGUSSON PREPARING TO FLARE. INFORM THE ADMIRAL."
WE'RE ALOFT, SARGE, BUT WE GOT BOGIES ON OUR BUTT, CLOSING FAST!

KICK IN THE AFTERBURNERS! MAYBE WE CAN OUTRUN THEM!
DISCIPLINE, LIEUTENANT. DISCIPLINE. LET THEM GET A BIT CLOSER FIRST.
SCHWA
SCHWA
SCHWA
INITIATING AFTERBURNER COUNTDOWN SEQUENCE. 10... 9... 8...
7654321ONE!
COME ON ALREADY!
NOW.
FWOOM!


THEY SUCCEEDED. THEY LOST.
THEY ESCAPED THE MOON ONLY TO FIND THE FLEET GONE.
AND FERGUSSON COMMENCED ITS TRANSFORMATION.
FERGUSSON 8 IS THE FARTHEST MOON FROM THE PLANET. I'M GOING TO TRY AND PLACE IT BETWEEN US AND THE BRUNT OF THE EXPLOSION.
MAYBE.
OH GAWD! WE'RE DEAD!
BEYOND THAT, WE'LL HAVE TO HOPE THE SUIT CAN TAKE IT!



THE FLARES AT LAST SUBSIDE AND A NEW STAR BURNS LIKE A LAMP IN THE VOID.
RINGING IT IS DEBRIS, ALL THAT IS LEFT OF ITS FORMER MOONS. SCATTERED IN THE NEW ASTEROID BELT IS THE FLOTSAM AND JETSAM THAT HAS MARKED THE PASSING OF TWO GREAT GALACTIC ARMIES.


AND ON ONE SHATTERED REMNANT OF ROCK HE STANDS, LIKE A SENTINEL - DYNAMO JOE, ARMOR GLEAMING IN THE LIGHT OF A NEW-BORN SUN.
THE SOLDIER SURVIVES, WHICH IS ALL HE DARED HOPE. HE STANDS POISED IN AN INTER-STELLAR NO MAN'S LAND, READY TO DO HIS DUTY, WHATEVER IT MIGHT BE OR WHEREVER IT MIGHT LEAD.
ALL HE ASKS IS THE WAY HOME.
THIS IS THE CREW OF THE BATTLESUIT DYNAMO JOE CALLING CENTRAL FLEET, COME IN CENTRAL FLEET.

COME IN, CENTRAL FLEET.
COME IN, CENTRAL FLEET
COME IN...
BUT THERE IS ONLY SILENCE.
- FIN -

DYNAMO JOE™

DATA FILE -- ROBOSOLDIER
TECHNICAL/HISTORICAL MATERIAL MEMORY

Unit Designation/Official Code:
Dynamo Joe

Unit Field Designation/Rank:
Flight Leader, Spectre Squadron
Squad Leader, Beta Company

Current Crew:
Sergeant Elanian Daro: Pilot/Gunner
Private Pomru: Navigator/Technician

General Battlesuit Specifications:
Height: 70 feet
Weight: 120 tons (Earth gravity)
Crew: 2 (pilot/gunner, nav/tech)
Power Source: Fusion Micro-Reactor
Fuel Range: 800 hours (Earth gravity)
20,000 hours (deep space)
Primary Mode Variations:
Mark I: Terrain mode, ground based.
Mark II: Deep space armor modified, extended range and speed.
Mark IIB: Crew designate modification on Mk II space armor.
Mark III: Restricted File

Cutaway Visual Index
1) targeting beam/close range laser
2) primary scanner/sensor cowling
3) targeting sensor/battle scanner
4) main hatch
5) ammo and service modules
6) variable range plasma side-arm
7) damage-seeking sensor
8) 4" plastec/titanium armor plate
9) communications mast
10) twin-mount plasma cannon
11) chest cavity cockpit
12) service crane/hoist, service bay
13) fusion micro-reactor
14) motor-function fluid-gear network
15) primary shock-absorber system
16) electric rocket grid and cowling

SGT. DARO

ELANIAN DARO:
Sergeant, Pilot/Gunner of Dynamo Joe.
Nationality: Citizen of the Imperium. Warrior Caste.

Around the year 2100, the Immortal **Magna Khan** left the Earth with a harem of five hundred women. The planet upon which they settled is now the Homeworld of the Imperium. They are a paramilitary society, with a thick coating of arts and sciences, devoted to physical perfection and the eventual creation of the "perfect human." Even though they control only a few star systems, they are considered a major power due to their unshakable unity and their fighting prowess.

Daro is, by nature, a loner, alienated from his race. Every step of the way, his path has been made as difficult as possible, as if some malicious diety amused itself with Daro's life. Daro had managed to achieve the rank of captain, but was broken back to sergeant when he covered for a superior officer's error in a previous conflict. The stimga of his alleged error has plagued his career and is responsible for his presence in the Orion War. For some reason the Khan has sent only the dregs of his military to fulfill his treaty commitments and doesn't care who knows it.

As an attempt to compensate for his tarnished reputation, Daro has strived to make his life synonomous with the Khan's dictates and by earning distinction within his warrior caste.

Daro is not the only Imperial assigned to Sigma Base. The Imperial Delegation is headed by **Prince Shaeton**, the direct son of the Magna Khan. His main purpose is to act as a spy for his father. He harbors plans of rebellion against the Khan, which he shares with his First Officer and lover, **Alexandra Daro**, Elanian's sister. Ippolitov and Shimamura acknowledge his official position, but do their best to work around him.

Even in the imperium, crippling accidents can occur. In a case where the body becomes useless, the mind can be computer-enhanced. This is the state of Data-Com 1, one of the three strategists of the Orion War. He is able to amass millions of bits of unrelated data and pick out the relevant information instantly. He also takes an inordinate amount of interest in young Daro's career.

PVT. POMRU

POMRU PURRRWAKAWAKA:
Private, Navigator/Technician of Dynamo Joe.
Nationality: Tavitan, citizen of the planet Londree.

Sometime after the year 3405, the Matriarch of the Tavitans, **R'thim**, had premonitions of an impending threat approaching Londree and set out to form an alliance with both the **Terran Confederation** and the **Imperium** through strong economic and military treaties. The accuracy of her predictions was shown in 3415 with the appearance of the **Mellanares** and the start of the Orion War.

Pomru is a young Tavitan out to see the Universe. Male Tavitans tend to be very excitable before they mature and make enthusiastic soldiers. Not great, but enthusiastic. Pomru is an ardent fan of old Earth culture and mimics it whenever he can. This is not a trait shared by his fellow Tavitans, who consider him a little odd. He is a superb mechanic and tinkerer and is constantly modifying the battlesuit. This is of great annoyance to the Tavitan Over-Sergeant Kaeto, who is positive that for every two modifications that he manages to find and have Pomru remove, there's another he missed.

OUR STORY SO FAR...

Abandoned by the retreating **Alliance** forces after the defeat at and subsequent destruction of the gas giant Fergusson, the crew of **Dynamo Joe** and their two passengers make two important discoveries:

The first is that the destruction of Fergusson did not destroy all of the Enemy as the Alliance High Command had hoped.

The second discovery is that of the **Corregidor**, a 9,589 foot long battleship, one of only five such built. Until now, it had been thought lost in the Alliance's first and worst battle with the Enemy, the **Rim Battle Massacre**, which had occurred six years previously. Even more astonishing is the sight of an intact Enemy war machine attached to the hull. Until now, even when slightly damaged, the Enemy machines had disintegrated. The chance of procuring an intact specimen is too important to pass up and, as Senior Officer on board Dynamo Joe, **Lieutenant Price** directs them to enter the silent ship.

Once aboard, Price and Daro split up to explore the ship while Pomru begins the job of recharging and resupplying the battlesuit. He is also ordered to keep reporter **Anda Warren** aboard, despite her protests. Warren registers her displeasure with this by sapping Pomru with a spanner and taking off, with the furious Tavitan in hot pursuit.

Both Price and Pomru are captured and discover that they have landed in the middle of a war. Price is captured by the remnants of the Corregidor's crew, led by Ensign Matt Zell; Pomru by the ship's fighting complement of **Outworlders**, descendants of worlds colonized by Earth, led by ex-marine **Tanamara**. The battle had been a stalemate -- until the appearance of Dynamo Joe.

As both sides begin to fight for control of the deserted battlesuit, Daro encounters the ship's medical officer, Doctor Hu. He explains how he has discovered that the enemy are actually microscopic organisms, linked together to form a single group consciousness. Crashing into the Corregidor and releasing itself, it infected the crew and, playing upon tensions between the different crew members, precipitated the mutiny. The crew is unaware that they are being controlled. Hu hypothesizes that this is an Enemy experiment, in which it has learned much about humanity.

Daro manages to get back to the battlesuit, which immediately ends the fight for its possession. Pomru and Price, abandoned by their captors, rejoin Daro in time to see the alien machine reactivate itself. Apparently the experiment is over. Too late they realize that Warren is directly in the path of the alien. Although the alien is practically on top of her, it cannot find her. Having no sensory apparatus of their own, the micro-organisms tap into the electrical images in the brains of their enemies. But Warren has placed herself in a **WU-LI** trance -- a yoga-like state that cuts off all sensory input -- thus blocking her brainwaves from the Enemy, rendering her "invisible."

In the ensuing confrontation between Dynamo Joe and the Enemy war machine, Lieutenant Price is killed while rescuing Warren.

With the war machine's destruction, the crew of the Corregidor snap out of their five year trance and turn the ship back towards Alliance lines. Once there, Daro returns to full-time Imperium service. Pomru awaits a new teammate and is kept busy by adapting and refitting Joe from ground to deep space mode, Mark II.

Daro has been selected to test fly the Imperium's new super battlesuit, the **Galax-C**. The suit malfunctions during the test, due to improper design modifications made by Prince Shitan. The out-of-control Galax-C, with an unconscious Daro at the controls, heads straight for Sigma Base. Orders are given for the suit's destruction. Pomru disobeys orders to pull back and manages to neutralize the runaway. Daro is dismissed from Imperium service and is reassigned with Pomru.

At this time, **Tanamara** reappears. She has been convicted of mutiny and murder. She is an ex-marine, from a world colonized by the Cheyenne, where she was a tribal leader and shaman. She is known to be sympathetic to the **Slavers**, a vicious group of freebooters and reavers who prey on the civilized worlds and call themselves the Blood Nation. The sentence Tanamara faces is death, but General Ippolitov offers her a deal.

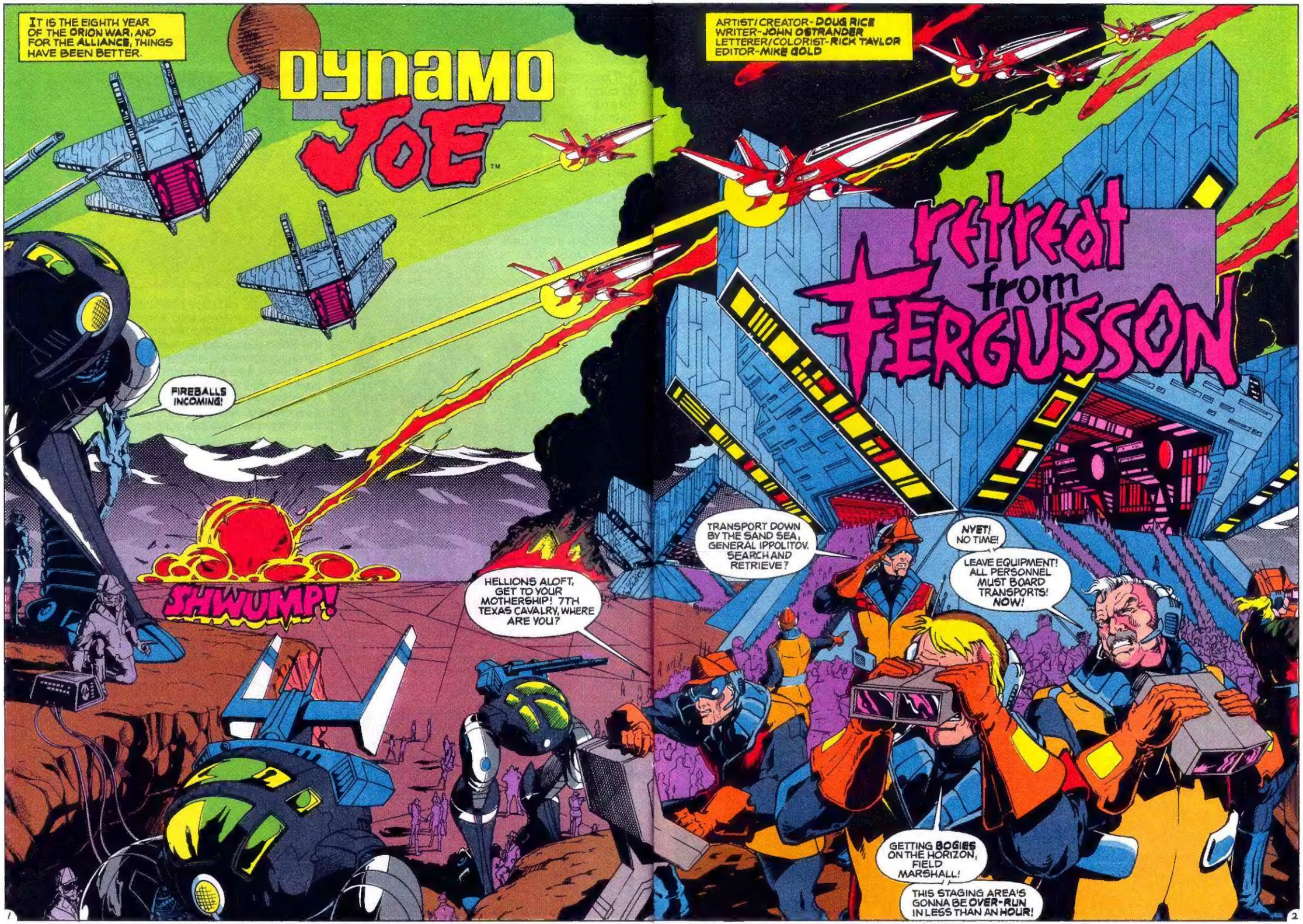
The crippling shortage the Alliance faces in the Orion War is not in material, but in personnel -- especially trained personnel. In return for fighting for the Alliance in what may be a suicide mission, Ippolitov will expunge Tanamara's past record. She agrees and assumes command of the troop transport **Wahoo Orten**.

The first new operation against the Enemy, newly dubbed the **Mellanares**, is operation **Boldshot Brimfire**, which relies upon the Mellanares' ability to read minds. After a fierce space battle the order is given to retreat. An apparent debacle! As the Enemy passes apparently destroyed Alliance battleships, they are revealed to be "Trojan Horses" -- concealing the new, improved Galax-Cs. They had remained hidden to the Mellanares thanks to a recent Tavitan invention, a sub-space cloaking device which rendered them invisible to the Enemy. The confused Enemy are attacked from all sides and retreat for the first time in the Orion War.

Flush with this first victory, the Alliance is hard at work in the space fortress of Sigma Base 6, determined to make the next phase the true turning point in the Orion War.

*****

No doubt you're saying to yourself, "How can I help?" Simple! Work hard in school, kill Enemy micro-organisms, and buy every single copy of **Dynamo Joe** you can find! And starting next month, you'll be able to find lots of them, because **Dynamo Joe** returns as as a continuing monthly series! So look for **Dynamo Joe** #4, on sale in October!


IT IS THE EIGHTH YEAR OF THE ORION WAR, AND FOR THE ALLIANCE, THINGS HAVE BEEN BETTER.
DYNAMO JOE™
FIREBALLS INCOMING!
SHWUMP!
HELLIONS ALOFT, GET TO YOUR MOTHERSHIP! 7TH TEXAS CAVALRY, WHERE ARE YOU?
ARTIST/CREATOR-DOUG RICE
WRITER-JOHN OSTRANDER
LETTERER/COLORIST-RICK TAYLOR
EDITOR-MIKE GOLD
retreat from FERGUSSON
TRANSPORT DOWN BY THE SAND SEA, GENERAL IPPOLITOV. SEARCH AND RETRIEVE?
NYET! NO TIME!
LEAVE EQUIPMENT! ALL PERSONNEL MUST BOARD TRANSPORTS! NOW!
GETTING BOGIES ON THE HORIZON, FIELD MARSHALL!
THIS STAGING AREA'S GONNA BE OVER-RUN IN LESS THAN AN HOUR!